

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The gasket of claim 1~~ A gasket for sealing a lower body of an engine to an upper body of the engine, the engine having a rocker member adapted to rock about an axis intermediate the rocker member and a pushrod, the rocker member located in the upper body, the pushrod extending from the lower body to the upper body and engaging an end of the rocker member, the gasket comprising:

a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the upper body to the lower body;

a pushrod support portion extending outwardly from the sealing portion adapted to engage the pushrod, at least a portion of the pushrod support portion engaging the pushrod is constructed from a material that is softer than the material of the pushrod; and

wherein the upper body comprises a rocker box and the lower body comprises a head and the sealing portion is adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the rocker box to the head.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The gasket of claim 1~~ A gasket for sealing a lower body of an engine to an upper body of the engine, the engine having a rocker member adapted to rock about an axis intermediate the rocker member and a pushrod, the rocker member located in the upper body, the pushrod extending from the lower body to the upper body and engaging an end of the rocker member, the gasket comprising:

a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the upper body to the lower body;

a pushrod support portion extending outwardly from the sealing portion adapted to engage the pushrod, at least a portion of the pushrod support portion engaging the pushrod is constructed from a material that is softer than the material of the pushrod; and

wherein the upper body comprises a valve cover and the lower body comprises a head and the sealing portion is adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the valve cover to the head.

4. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 2 wherein at least a portion of the pushrod support portion engaging the pushrod comprises a material selected from the group consisting of a polymer and cellulose.

5. (Original) The gasket of claim 4 wherein the pushrod is constructed from a material comprising metal.

6. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 2 wherein the sealing portion comprises substantially the same material as the pushrod support portion.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~The gasket of claim 1~~ A gasket for sealing a lower body of an engine to an upper body of the engine, the engine having a rocker member adapted to rock about an axis intermediate the rocker member and a pushrod, the rocker member located in the upper body, the pushrod extending from the lower body to the upper body and engaging an end of the rocker member, the gasket comprising:

a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the upper body to the lower body;

a pushrod support portion extending outwardly from the sealing portion adapted to engage the pushrod, at least a portion of the pushrod support portion engaging the pushrod is constructed from a material that is softer than the material of the pushrod; and

wherein the pushrod support portion further comprises a substantially C-shaped opening adapted to receive the pushrod and substantially support against lateral movement of the pushrod.

8. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim [[1]] 2 wherein the pushrod support portion further comprises an aperture adapted to receive the pushrod and substantially support the pushrod in relation to the pushrod support portion.

9. (Original) The gasket of claim 8 further including polymeric materials deposited on a metallic gasket.

10. (Original) The gasket of claim 7 further including a polymeric material formed on a metallic gasket.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) ~~The engine of claim 9~~ An engine having one or more valves operated by a pushrod, comprising:

an engine block assembly;

a head mounted on the engine block assembly, the head at least partially receiving the pushrod and the one or more valves;

an upper body mounted on the head;

a gasket between the head and the upper body, the gasket having a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal the upper body to the head and a pushrod supporting tab extending outward from the sealing portion and engaging the pushrod, at least a portion of the pushrod supporting tab engaging the pushrod is adapted to wear away when the engine is operated; and wherein the upper body is a valve cover.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The engine of claim 9~~ An engine having one or more valves operated by a pushrod, comprising:

an engine block assembly;

a head mounted on the engine block assembly, the head at least partially receiving the pushrod and the one or more valves;

an upper body mounted on the head;

a gasket between the head and the upper body, the gasket having a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal the upper body to the head and a pushrod supporting tab extending outward from the sealing portion and engaging the pushrod, at least a portion of the pushrod supporting tab engaging the pushrod is adapted to wear away when the engine is operated; and wherein the upper body is a rocker box.

14. (Currently Amended) The engine of claim [[9]] 13 wherein the pushrod comprises metal and the gasket comprises at least one of a polymer material and a cellulosic material.

15. (Currently Amended) The engine of claim [[9]] 13 wherein the gasket and pushrod supporting tab comprise a polymer material.

16. (Currently Amended) The engine of claim [[9]] 13 further comprising tab supporting members carried by the head adapted to support the pushrod supporting tab substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the pushrod.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 15~~ A method of assembling a portion of an engine assembly, comprising:

placing a gasket having pushrod engaging member on a lower engine body, the pushrod engaging member adapted to wear away during operation of the engine;

placing an elongate pushrod in the engine body and in abutting engagement with the pushrod engaging member of the gasket;

supporting the elongate pushrod substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the elongate pushrod with the gasket; and

wherein the lower engine member is an engine head.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 15~~ A method of assembling a portion of an engine assembly, comprising:

placing a gasket having pushrod engaging member on a lower engine body, the pushrod engaging member adapted to wear away during operation of the engine;

placing an elongate pushrod in the engine body and in abutting engagement with the pushrod engaging member of the gasket;

supporting the elongate pushrod substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the elongate pushrod with the gasket; and

wherein the pushrod comprises metal and at least a portion of the pushrod engaging member comprises at least one of a polymer and a cellulosic material.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[15]]~~ 19 further comprising inserting the pushrod into a pushrod engaging aperture of the pushrod engaging member.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 15~~ A method of assembling a portion of an engine assembly, comprising:

placing a gasket having pushrod engaging member on a lower engine body, the pushrod engaging member adapted to wear away during operation of the engine;

placing an elongate pushrod in the engine body and in abutting engagement with the pushrod engaging member of the gasket;

supporting the elongate pushrod substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the elongate pushrod with the gasket; and

further comprising supporting the pushrod engaging member on a support stub carried by the engine body.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) ~~The gasket of claim 23~~ A gasket for sealing a lower body of an engine to an upper body of the engine, the engine having a rocker member that engages a pushrod extending from the lower body to the upper body, the gasket comprising:

a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the upper body to the lower body;

a pushrod support portion extending outwardly from the sealing portion adapted to engage and support the pushrod in rough alignment with an end of the rocker member prior to engaging the rocker member with the pushrod and adapted to reside out of substantial contact with the pushrod after engaging with the rocker member with the pushrod; and

wherein the upper body comprises a rocker box and the lower body comprises a head and the sealing portion is adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the rocker box to the head.

25. (Currently Amended) ~~The gasket of claim 23~~ A gasket for sealing a lower body of an engine to an upper body of the engine, the engine having a rocker member that engages a pushrod extending from the lower body to the upper body, the gasket comprising:

a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the upper body to the lower body;

a pushrod support portion extending outwardly from the sealing portion adapted to engage and support the pushrod in rough alignment with an end of the rocker member prior to engaging the rocker member with the pushrod and adapted to reside out of substantial contact with the pushrod after engaging with the rocker member with the pushrod; and

wherein the upper body comprises a valve cover and the lower body comprises a head and the sealing portion is adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the valve cover to the head.



26. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim [[23]] 24 wherein at least a portion of the pushrod support portion engaging the pushrod comprises a material selected from the group consisting of a polymer and cellulose.

27. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim [[23]] 24 wherein the sealing portion comprises substantially the same material as the pushrod support portion.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~The gasket of claim 23~~ A gasket for sealing a lower body of an engine to an upper body of the engine, the engine having a rocker member that engages a pushrod extending from the lower body to the upper body, the gasket comprising:

a sealing portion adapted to substantially seal at least a portion of the upper body to the lower body;

a pushrod support portion extending outwardly from the sealing portion adapted to engage and support the pushrod in rough alignment with an end of the rocker member prior to engaging the rocker member with the pushrod and adapted to reside out of substantial contact with the pushrod after engaging with the rocker member with the pushrod; and

wherein the pushrod support portion further comprises a substantially C-shaped opening adapted to receive the pushrod and substantially support against lateral movement of the pushrod.

29. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim [[23]] 24 wherein the pushrod support portion further comprises an aperture adapted to receive the pushrod and substantially support the pushrod in relation to the pushrod support portion.

30. (Currently Amended) The gasket of claim [[23]] 24 wherein the at least a portion of the pushrod support portion engaging the pushrod is constructed from a material that is softer than the material of the pushrod.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 31~~ A method of assembling a portion of an engine assembly, comprising:

placing a gasket having pushrod engaging member on a lower engine body;

placing an elongate pushrod in the engine body and in abutting engagement with the pushrod engaging member of the gasket;

supporting the elongate pushrod substantially laterally to a longitudinal axis of the elongate pushrod member with the gasket;

engaging the elongate pushrod with a rocker member thereby moving the elongate pushing member substantially out of engagement with the gasket; and

wherein the lower engine member is an engine head.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[31]] 33 wherein the elongate pushrod comprises metal and at least a portion of the pushrod engaging member comprises at least one of a polymer and a cellulosic material.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[31]] 33 further comprising inserting the elongate pushrod into a pushrod engaging aperture of the pushrod engaging member.

36. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 32~~ A method of assembling a portion of an engine assembly, comprising:

placing a gasket having pushrod engaging member on a lower engine body;

placing an elongate pushrod in the engine body and in abutting engagement with the pushrod engaging member of the gasket;

supporting the elongate pushrod substantially laterally to a longitudinal axis of the elongate pushrod member with the gasket; and

engaging the elongate pushrod with a rocker member thereby moving the elongate pushing member substantially out of engagement with the gasket; and

further comprising supporting the pushrod engaging member on a support stub carried by the engine body.

37. (New) The method of claim 19 further comprising installing a rocker that receives the pushrod at one end to the engine body without further substantially aligning the rocker and the pushrod.

38. (New) The method of claim 33 wherein engaging the pushrod with the rocker member comprises engaging the pushrod with the rocker member without further substantially aligning the rocker member and the elongate pushrod.